

Post-Event Summary Report

Name of Event: Fifth Early Stage Alzheimer's Disease Conference

Date of Event: Wednesday, April 20th, 2005

Location of Event: New York, New York
(Include city and state)

Number of Persons attending: 275

Sponsoring Organization(s): Alzheimer's Association – NYC Chapter

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Priority Issue #1:

Improved detection of cognitive impairment, especially in the early-stage early-onset (under 60 “Baby Boomer” generation) by their primary care physicians (PCPs).

Barriers:

- . PCPs lack education to recognize early-stage early-onset Alzheimer's disease
- . Lack of time during MD visits to reveal or discuss concerns about memory and cognition
- . PCPs often not sure about “next steps” and resources in the community.

Proposed Solution(s):

- . Increased efforts to create physician education programs to increase knowledge of signs and symptoms of early Alzheimer's disease
- . Increased consumer awareness of critical signs of early Alzheimer's disease to facilitate discussions with PCPs
- . Physician education programs to include awareness of appropriate community medical and diagnostic services, and support services

Priority Issue #2:

Improved recognition and acknowledgement of early signs and symptoms of Alzheimer's disease on the part of consumers.

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Barriers:

- . Misconceptions about “normal” aging – symptoms frequently dismissed as “just getting older”
- . Misconceptions about age of onset: fifty and sixty year olds believe AD to be a disease of old age exclusively
- . Alzheimer’s disease carries a stigma
- . Fear and denial of symptoms

Proposed Solution(s):

- . Increased public education efforts to inform about early signs and symptoms and encourage diagnostic intervention
- . Public education programs targeting “baby boomer” generation specifically
- . Ongoing public education, such as the Early Stage Conference, to remove the social stigma of a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease
- . Ongoing public education about research and treatment to combat fear and denial of symptoms

Priority Issue #3

Develop more programs and services to support, educate, and engage those in the early stage and their family members and caregivers. . There is a significant need for programs for those in the Baby Boomer generation who are not appropriate for programs for people who are older or more impaired. Continuum of services need to begin earlier in the disease stages.

Barriers:

- . Lack of incentive for appropriate programs for baby boomers with AD. (Funding often targets older adults.)
- . Lack of awareness of need for programs for those in the early stage.
- . Lack of appropriate training for health care providers
- . Transition from early stage to later stage programming is frequently problematic

Proposed Solution(s):

- . Identify new funding sources that could support early stage programs
- . Continue to education health care community about the needs of early stage and early onset individuals with a progressive cognitive illness
- . Increased efforts to educate health care providers as to the nature of early stage and early onset Alzheimer’s disease
- . Creation of a true continuum of care so that as the person progresses along the course of the illness, there is another program to which he\she can transition.

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Priority Issue #4

Improve education and training for health professionals who will be interacting with “baby boomers” with early Alzheimer’s disease. (The traditional models of care may not be appropriate for a better educated, more demanding generation.)

Barriers:

- . Lack of funding for training about early stage Alzheimer’s disease
- . Few “model” programs available
- . Lack of funding to support development of new, innovative and creative approaches

Proposed Solution(s):

- . Identify new funding sources that could provide incentives and support for the development of new and creative approaches to early Alzheimer’s care
- . Increase efforts to educate providers about the needs of the early stage and early onset population (e.g. the Early Stage Conference)
- . Identify incentives to create appropriate and innovative programming for this population.

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